



St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024 at 7.30pm in The Bell Meadow Pavilion, St Nicholas at Wade

Present: Councillors D. Divers – Chairman, L. Ageros, S. Smyth, M. Lawrance, D. Tweedale, E. Dore, G. Pugh
Also, Present: KCC Cllr Linda Wright, District Cllr Abi Smith, Sara Archer – Parish Clerk, plus 0 members of public.

119/23-24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from KCC Cllr Derek Crow-Brown and PC Andy Howe.

120/23-24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Dore declared an interest – Item 130 (b) repayment of expenses. Cllr Ageros declared an interest – Item 131, as an allotment holder, and did not participate in any discussion or decision making pertaining to this item.

121/23-24 PREVIOUS MINUTES

RESOLVED: To approve minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on 9th January 2024. These were proposed by Cllr Lawrance, seconded by Cllr Tweedale, all were in agreement and therefore signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

122/23-24 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Divers expressed his thanks to the handyman team for their hard work in upgrading the bar facility in the Pavilion. It was noted that the maintenance of the grassed community areas and trees at The Length had now been taken over by appointed contractors. The handymen were thanked for keeping the areas maintained in the interim period. Cllr Divers reported he had been litter picking and cleared the overgrowth at the footpath of Stuart Lane.

123/23-24 CLERK'S REPORT/CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised she had ordered an official copy of the King's Portrait from Cubiquity which could be displayed as appropriate. Further correspondence had been sent to TDC to follow up the repair enquiry for the retaining wall of the Church. Cllr Abi Smith advised she would also speak to the Property and Asset Management Team on behalf of the Parish Council. The Clerk would copy all correspondence to her for information. Cllr Lawrance would put hazard tape around the damaged area until repairs can be carried out.

124/23-24 COUNCILLORS REPORT

Cllr Pugh reported he had attended the TRRG meeting, where Speedwatch was primarily discussed. It was confirmed that no closures of the public libraries in the local area were planned. Emergency Plans were discussed, it was noted that the Resilience Team at TDC would be contacted in the first instance. Due to the strain on Adult Care Services, KCC were exploring options to enable residents to stay in their own homes, rather than be taken into a Care Home.

Cllr Tweedale advised he had contacted St John's College for permission to plant a copper beach tree on St John's Green. He had not received a response to date. The pothole along Orchard Lane had been reported together with the uneven kerbstone outside of The Bell Inn.

Cllr Lawrance had been actively involved with trying to identify the irresponsible owners who are letting their dogs foul on the footpaths and in Bell Meadow without cleaning up behind them. The issue will continue to be monitored.

Complaints had also been received regarding dogs accessing the children's play area. It was suggested a spring lock was fitted to the gate, to prevent dogs from being able to push open the gate. The handymen would be approached to look into fitting a suitable mechanism.

Cllr Lawrance had also been litter picking and had attended a meeting regarding the tunnel which potentially runs beneath the Church. A camera will be used to locate and investigate the tunnel.

Cllr Dore confirmed he had met with Colin Briggs of the Ramblers Association to discuss the public rights of way at Sun Lane. Mr Briggs would be making enquiries with KCC and the Ramblers Association to confirm the position of the footpath.

Cllr Smyth enquired whether it would be possible for the Parish Council to approach UK Power Networks regarding the recent outages suffered in the villages. The Clerk would write to the company.

It was confirmed that the legal advisor at KALC had suggested that the Parish Council should remain non-political and therefore it would not be appropriate to display posters supporting a ceasefire on the public noticeboards. The promotion of religious views on the noticeboards was queried, however, it was agreed that church events were advertised as community involvement

and should therefore be displayed. Cllr Smyth was encouraged to support her beliefs on an individual basis, and not as a member of the Parish Council. It was noted that TDC had recently taken a stance in support of the ceasefire in Gaza. Sincere condolences were expressed to the families of Bernard Clayson, and more recently Steven Emms. Both gentlemen had been Parish Councillors, Bernard in particular being a Chairman for a number of years.

Cllr Ageros had continued to maintain the garden at the flagpole, TE10 footpath, and village planters. Cllr Ageros noted the further appeal submission for Manston Airport.

125/23-24 THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Abi Smith confirmed that the recent TDC outage was in fact a cyber attack, however, the National Cyber Security service had been duly informed and residents were reassured that no personal data had been compromised.

TDC have launched their parking strategy consultation. Residents were encouraged to comment online.

Cllr Smith also advised that TDC had set their annual budget, and had approved a modest increase of 3% on Council Tax, approx. £7.64 per band D property.

It was acknowledged that the travelling community required a suitable site to pitch, however, Potten Street was not adequate for their needs. Cllr Smith would make enquiries to ensure that the site was no longer being given consideration.

126/23-24 KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Linda Wright advised that Alan Watson would be invited to the next TRRG meeting to discuss the Speedwatch Scheme in more detail. Volunteers to run the scheme in the villages were welcomed.

A 'Best Dressed Village' competition had been suggested as part of the D-Day commemorations. All villages were encouraged to get involved.

KCC had agreed a 5% increase to households in their budget.

The Parish Council were advised that any grant funding applications should be submitted before the end of February.

Cllr Crow-Brown was not in attendance, however, he submitted the following report:

Part of the A299 Thanet Way will undergo extensive reconstruction work from April following temporary repairs made to the road to keep it safe in recent years.

Kent County Council (KCC) was successful in bidding for £4 million from the Department for Transport's Challenge Fund, supported by an allocation of about £420,000 from KCC's own road maintenance budget, which will be used to complete the works.

The ground below the coastbound A299 has expanded and contracted with hotter summers and wetter winters, meaning the road can be left bumpy as a result of the underlying soil growing and shrinking.

We will excavate the road to a significant depth and rebuild it with a much stronger construction, using specialist geotextile materials, different sized aggregates and multiple layers of asphalt.

While work is being carried out, part of the road will have to be closed but a contraflow system will be installed between the turn off for Whitstable and the Chestfield Tunnel to minimise disruption to the travelling public as much as possible.

Road closures in my division are causing an enormous amount of case work, especially businesses losing lots of revenue. I will keep chasing KCC Highways for their officers to closely monitor utilities work.

127/23-24 KENT POLICE REPORT

PC Andy Howe was unable to attend the meeting, however, he provided the following report which was read by the Clerk as follows:

Burglary from the business community stands out as being concerning, however as you may be aware, these related to two incidents where a group of thieves entered and stole from a large number of storage containers on Manston. Three persons were arrested in relation to the second incident and that case is ongoing.

More recently we have had an upsurge in vehicle related theft offences, these have occurred over a two-month period affecting such areas as Minster, Monkton, St Nicholas, Birchington and Nethercourt. We have identified two suspects so far and our investigation is ongoing. Unfortunately, I can't add any meat to this at this current time, but as soon as I can give you more information, I will do so.

Over the last month, we have had incidents of youth related Anti-Social Behaviour mostly around Minster but also hitting Ramsgate Town. The youths have all been identified and proactive activity, disrupting their behaviour has resulted in arrests and Community Protection Notices being issued. British Transport Police and the Thanet Neighbourhood Task Force are working this week on an operation focused on dealing with this group.

I understand how frustrating it is when we seem to be unable to effectively deal with youth ASB, but I would encourage anyone to call in asap any ASB activity so we can disrupt and build a portfolio of incidents which then allow for a more robust policing. My own focus during the last month has been towards ASB disruption, visibility and intelligence building around the vehicle thefts and poaching activity. I have been actively involved around arrest attempts and searches for the theft from motor vehicle offences, along with attending a small number of suspicious poaching calls. I have undertaken speed checks in Acol and Cliffsend and will be conducting further "pop up" speed checks over the next few weeks in and around the villages.

Calls to St Nicholas and Sarre:

There have been 9 calls in the last month of which four were domesticated incidents, four were traffic related and one was for a member of public providing intelligence.

128/23-24 BELL MEADOW REPORT

A meeting would be arranged to plan events for the Pavilion for the forthcoming year. Details would be circulated to Councillors once confirmed. The Clerk would enquire with the Events Team at TDC whether once fee would be applicable if all events were booked together.

An additional football team were now using the facilities, and enquires had been made for regular bookings of music rehearsals. Compliments had been received from the footballers with regard to the standard of the pitch.

The increase in dog fouling at Bell Meadow was noted and the Clerk would make enquiries for installing additional poo bag dispensers.

The warm hub was open for residents to attend and was growing in popularity.

129/23-24 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a) No new applications received.

b) FH/TH/23/1594 – Permission Granted

130/23-24 FINANCE

a) The Clerk presented the monthly bank reconciliation between the cash book and bank accounts.

RESOLVED: To approve the monthly bank reconciliation for January. (Proposed: Cllr Lawrance, seconded Cllr Tweedale).

b) The Clerk presented the monthly payment schedule which included the following payments:

E. Dore - Repayment	£19.62
HMRC - Employee PAYE	£287.20
S. Archer - Clerk's salary & expenses	£1,053.93
M. Savage - Handyman's salary & expenses	£619.48
J. Perfect - Handyman's salary & expenses	£564.51
D. McDade - Handyman's salary & expenses	£368.85
EDF - BMP Electricity	£242.74
Hugofox - Website hosting fee	£11.99
Lloyds Bank CC	£3.00
SNS - Domain hosting	£57.60
Zurich Insurance - Annual Premium	£905.98
Wantsum Brewery - Bar Stock	£60.00
Ewart Clough - Christmas Trees	£344.40
Business Stream - Water (BMP)	£80.03
M. Savage - Repayment for Bar fridge	£140.00

Receipts:

Donation towards 'Warm Hub'	£20.00
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RESOLVED: To approve payment of invoices included in the monthly payment schedule for February.

(Proposed: Cllr Divers, Seconded: Cllr Pugh)

131/23-24 ALLOTMENTS

The contracts for the allotments were discussed. It was proposed that the plot holders of those previously served notice, would not be renewed for the forthcoming year, and the allotments would be offered to those on the waiting list. It was agreed to split plot 2 into half plots in order to reduce the waiting list.

The fee was discussed and in view of the fact the fees have not increased for a number of years, and a significant amount of work had been undertaken to improve the allotment area, it was agreed to increase the annual charges to £30 per half plot and £60 per full plot.

RESOLVED: To approve an increase in annual charges for the allotments to £30 per half plot and £60 per full plot. Not to automatically renew the contract for plots 2 and 3 and to approve plot 2 being split into two half plots.

(Proposed: Cllr Divers, seconded: Cllr Dore)

132/23-24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- No issues were raised.

The meeting was concluded by the Chairman at 8:50pm.